We citizens of San Juan County are indeed fortunate to have Lovel Pratt as a candidate for County Council in the April 23 election. Her 20 years of creative involvement in many aspects of community life have demonstrated her deep caring, both for the well-being of her fellow Islanders -– their housing, livelihoods, education etc. -- and for the treasured environment which adds so much to Island life -– recreational, economic and educational opportunities, and just plain enjoyment of the natural world.

Appropriately enough, since our County is an archipelago surrounded by State waters and Lovel has such a strong interest in protecting our marine environment, she has become involved in state issues related to marine waters. The Washington State Association of Counties appointed her to committees dealing with oil spills and vessel traffic risks. The knowledge she has gained and the connections she's made are very valuable to our County and are one reason I'd like to see Lovel return to the County Council.

During Lovel's first term on the County Council the proposal to establish the Gateway Pacific Cherry Pacific coal terminal came to light. Lovel immediately wrote a request to have the officials in charge of the Environmental Impact Statement hold a scoping hearing in the San Juan Islands. The full Council signed it, and the whole county community had an opportunity to vent its concerns about the potential damage to our health and environment to the officials.

During the scoping period Lovel wrote voluminous scoping letters to ask probing questions about the potential effects of the shipment of coal through these waters. These were also signed by the full Council. The outcome of all that effort is yet to be revealed. Whatever it may be, Lovel worked tirelessly to protect the interest of the County residents and the marine environment they care so much about.

Let's vote for Lovel and give her a chance to be as effective an advocate for San Juan County again!

Louisa Nishitani